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MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH
SERVICE

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
BUREAU OF MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

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DOCUMENTS SECTION

CHILD HEALTH CENTERS

DENTAL SERVICE

NUTRITION SERVICE

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE

FUNCTIONS OF CHILD HEALTH CENTERS

The purposes of a child health center are twofold; to educate parents in better methods of child care; to provide continuous health supervision for the children of the community from birth to school age. The service of the child health center should be made available to all who cannot obtain such a service from their own resources. Primarily the service offered is preventive and supervisory; when defects are found the family doctor or dentist must be called upon to make corrections. The establishment of a Child Health Center in a community should, therefore, increase and not decrease the volume of work of the private practitioners.

The plan for the accomplishment of these purposes includes:

- (1) Review of the child's health record and physical examination of the individual child at regular intervals.

Mothers should be encouraged to have their children seen regularly until they are six years old, because one of our objectives is to have the child in proper condition to withstand the stress of school life. This care will not only add to the happiness of the child but it will actually save the taxpayer's money, since it costs from \$70.00 to \$120.00 for a handicapped child to repeat a school year.

- (2) The physician's conference with the mother, at which he discusses with her all the aspects of the child's health and development, such as habit formation, advising her regarding the correction of any abnormal conditions or special needs.
- (3) Service at the Child Health Center by the Public Health Nurse, and when feasible by Nutritionists and Dentists, and Dental Hygienists.

- (4) Follow-up service by the Public Health Nurse or volunteer worker.

It is most important that the community realize its responsibility in protecting the health of its children and it is essential that the community be asked to participate in the health program, both financially and administratively.

ORGANIZATION OF CHILD HEALTH CENTERS

To make possible such financial and administrative participation it is necessary that Civic Groups be mobilized and so organized that their efforts will be integrated. This saves both time and money by preventing overlapping of effort. Some communities have accomplished this organization themselves but in other communities the State has been able to help by providing the services of a trained Civic Group Aid who has been successful in stimulating interest in the work, and helping to correlate the activities of lay groups.

It is advisable that lay groups form a Committee. This Committee is usually called the CHILD HEALTH CENTER COMMITTEE.

FACILITIES AVAILABLE

The Department of Health, through its Bureau of Maternal and Child Health, has available the following resources for the maintenance of Child Health Centers in individual communities.

Clinician's Service
Nursing Service
Scientific Equipment

The community is asked to provide a location for the Child Health Center. This may be in a club room, community house, or a public building. Chairs, tables,

etc., should be available for the waiting room. If a charge is necessary for the use of building, light and heat, the community will care for this expense.

The community through its Child Health Center Committee, should know where financial assistance can be obtained for the correction of defects for those children whose parents cannot have such corrections made from their own resources.

The Child Health Center Committee may assist in the following ways:

Providing, HOSTESSES, PUBLICITY, TRANSPORTATION, and FINANCES FOR CORRECTIONS.

DENTAL SERVICE

The first objective of the Dental Division is to stimulate and assist communities to establish their own dental program. This is usually done by working through the school systems and in cooperation with local agencies such as Service Clubs, Women's Clubs, Tuberculosis Societies, Red Cross, and Parent-Teacher Associations.

Both dentists and dental hygienists are employed for this work. The dentists act as advisors to such communities which may have or wish to formulate dental programs. They also act as co-ordinating officers between the dental profession and the Department of Health.

The hygienists examine children in rural schools and give instruction in dental health in the classroom. Also, under certain conditions, the Dental Division will pay a fee for a dental clinician in those communities which will set up and operate a dental clinic for school children.

NUTRITION SERVICE

This service in an individual community is available upon request for a period of 2 to 6 weeks or longer depending upon the response and demands. It includes any or all of the following.

- (1) Illustrated lectures on Nutrition to Women's Clubs, F. T. A. Groups, Men's Service Clubs, Professional Groups as Physicians, Dentists, Nurses, Teachers and Social Workers.
- (2) Dietary consultations with mothers attending Child Health Centers.
- (3) Food demonstrations in Health Centers and for other community agencies.
- (4) Classes or study groups for mothers emphasizing--

The Food Budget
Low Cost Meals
Use of Protective Foods
Use of Surplus Commodities

- (5) Nutrition Institutes for professional workers or refresher courses for professional and lay groups.

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE

- (1) To supervise the medical inspection of pupils in the first, second, and third class school districts.
- (2) To provide (when funds are available) for the physical examination of school children in the fourth class school districts and to organize the follow-up program on corrections.
- (3) To provide for the enforcement of the Vaccination Law.

- (4) To provide for the annual sanitary inspection of all the schools of the State.
 - (5) To provide in fourth class districts, the physical examination of school children seeking employment.
 - (6) To provide for the examination and reporting of children whose physical condition is such that attendance in the public schools is detrimental to their own health and the health of others.
 - (7) To provide for a way of removing children from the active roll of school attendance when forced to be absent due to physical conditions or prolonged illness.
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Requests for Maternal and Child Health
Service should be made to the

Bureau of Maternal and Child Health
Department of Health
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

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